Castlemaine Naturalist

October 2015

Vol. 40.9 #436

Monthly newsletter of the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Red-necked Avocet, Lake Victoria
- photo by Joy Weatherill

Wednesday Wildflower walk #1

A quick tour in light rain around some of the northern tracks leading to the Fryers ridge, starting from the Pyrenees highway via the Tunnel Hill track, with several short stops along the way, including the cutting on the Old Coach road, and Old Tower track, gave the general impression of being a bit early for most of the wildflowers on September 16. However there were a few species on show though for the most part not in great abundance:

Purple Coral-pea *Hardenbergia violacea*, Early Nancy *Wurmbea dioica*, a *Pimelea* sp., Pink Bells *Tetratheca ciliata*, *Dillwynia* sp. Two species of *Leucopogon*, Fairy Wax *Philotheca verrucosa*, *Hovea* sp., *Grevillea alpina*, Guinea flower *Hibbertia* sp., and *Drosera peltata.*

Wednesday Wildflower walk #2

On September 23, Geraldine took us to the Escape track on a fine afternoon. The area was abundant with *Acacia acinacea* in flower, though on the wane. The first find was of a small group of Goldfields Grevillea *Grevillea dryophylla* in flower. Pink Fingers were abundant - the experts identified both *fuscata* and *carnea* species. Others species identified were *Tetratheca ciliata*, Fairy Wax *Philotheca verrucosa*, *Senecio* sp., Grey Everlasting *Ozothamnus obcordatus*, Downy Grevillea *G. alpina*, Early Nancy *Wurmbea dioica,* Tall Sundew *Drosera peltata*, Billy Button *Craspedia variabilis*, Waxlip orchid *Glossodia major*, Leopard orchid *Diuris pardina,* White Marianth *Rhytidosporum procumbens,* Gorse Bitter-pea *Daviesia ulicifolia*, Nodding Greenhood *P. nutans*, Yam Daisy *Microseris* sp., Rice Flower *Pimelea* sp., and Moss Sunray *Hyalosperma demissum.*

Escape Track photos p. 2
Top: Goldfields Grevillea *Grevillea dryophylla*
Bottom left: Tall Sundew *Drosera peltata* - note that the flower stalk is thrust well above the sticky bits to avoid the pollinator being caught.
Bottom right: Leopard orchid *Diuris pardina*
- text and images by Noel Young

Recent Botanical observations by Richard Piesse

I have enjoyed three very different walks in recent weeks.

1. At **Dunmoochin head, Cottles Bridge:**

Dry bush in old mining areas north-east of Melbourne, I saw three Greenhood orchids, Leopard orchid, Blue Caladenia, a Helmet orchid, as well as the **Rosella Spider Orchid which is classed as a threatened species.**

There were seven different Wattles, *Clematis microphylla, Drosera auriculata* and *whittakeri, Daviesia leptophylla, Hakea decurrens, Hardenbergia violacea, Hovea linearis, Leucopogon virgatus, Microseris sp., and Wurmbea dioica.*

2. **Anglesea Heath, close to the river**

Nine different Wattles, *Billardiera mutabilis, Clematis microphylla, Comesperma volubile, Correa reflexa* (green), *Daviesia brevifolia, Drosera whittakeri, Epacris impressa, Goodenia ovata, Hakea decurrens, Hibbertia riparia, Kennedia prostrata, Leucopogon virgatus, Myoporum petiolatum, Pimelea glauca, Tetratheca ciliata.*

3. In the **Wombat Forest at Korweinguboora** - a short walk along the old Anderson Tramway: *Acacia mucronata, A. verticillata, Epacris impressa, Pterostylis melagramma.*

Please contribute to your newsletter!

Spring is here at last, the birds and insects are busy taking advantage of our rather short wildflower season, and once again we need to make the most of the window of activity. Perhaps this accounts for a slump of late in contributions to the newsletter. Fortunately I was able to scrounge enough of my own material to tide us over this time, but this won't always happen.

We are always in need of articles, photos, observations, anything related to natural history, especially if of local relevance. If you are more of a photographer than a writer, photo observations with a note of explanation are always welcome. If you aren't yet 'digitised' or can't email them, (at reduced file size please) we can scan a print. "If it interests you it is sure to interest others." - Ed.

Excursion to the Whipstick

Noel Young

Our September excursion was to the Whipstick bush on the north side of Bendigo. George had some historic notes which we tried to follow to certain spots along the tracks. Among the flowering plants of interest were three characteristic of this area rather than ours - Whirrakee Wattle *Acacia williamsonii*, Cypress Daisy-bush *Olearia teretifolia*, and Peach Heath *Lissanthe strigosa.*

Among other plants noted were Dusky Fingers *Caladenia fuscata*, Blue Caladenia *Cyanicula caerulea*, Dwarf Greenhood *Pterostylis nana,* Leopard Orchid *Diuris pardina*, Waxlip Orchid *Glossodia major*, Grey Everlasting *Ozothamnus obcordatus,* White Marianth *Rhytidosporum procumbens*, Gold dust Wattle *Acacia acinacea* and *Cotula* sp.

Birds noted along the way were Red Wattlebird, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Common Bronzewing, White-winged Choughs, and in the "mallee" area, Grey Shrike-thrush, Fuscous Honeyeater, Crimson Rosella, Raven and Galah.

Above: photographing orchids

Above right: Whirrakee Wattle

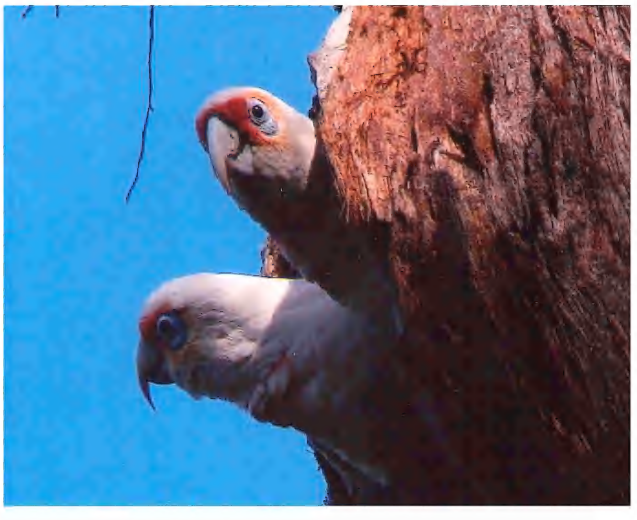
Right: Cotula sp.

Above: Dusky Fingers *Caladenia fuscata*, and Blue Caladenia *Cyanicula caerulea*
Below: Cypress Daisy-bush *Olearia teretifolia;* Peach Heath *Lissanthe strigosa.* in bud - the "trumpet" flower looks similar to Daphne Heath.

Photo Observations

Joy Weatherill at Point Lonsdale and Anglesea:

Singing Honeyeater, Long-billed Corellas, and Willy Wagtail portrait.



THIS MONTH'S GUEST SPEAKER - ANDREW SKEOCH

The sounds of our natural environment are comprised of many voices; birdsong, frog choruses, seasonal insect choirs, mammal calls… How have all these varied animal repertoires evolved? And how can we appreciate and find meaning in listening to nature's sound-world around us?

Join the audience with naturalist and bio-acoustic researcher, Andrew Skeoch as he presents beautiful and fascinating recordings from wild places around the world, and inspires you to hear the world afresh.

Noel Young

Yellow-rumped Thornbill nesting
at Crusoe Reservoir, Bendigo

Castlemaine Field Naturalists
Coming events

Fri October 9 meeting: Speaker ANDREW SKEOCH: Listen to the wild.

Sat October 10 field trip: Fryers Ridge

Fri November 13 meeting: Speaker JULIE WHITFIELD: Butterflies

Roadside Cleanup on Saturday, November 21st, 9am

Sat December 5: **Annual Bird Count**

Fri December 11 meeting: Members night

VISITORS ARE WELCOME AT CLUB ACTIVITIES

General meetings - (second Friday of each month, except January) are held in the Uniting Church (UCA) Hall (enter from Lyttleton St.) at 7.30 pm.

Field Trips - (Saturday following the general meeting) leave from the car park opposite Castle Motel, Duke Street at 1.30pm sharp unless stated otherwise. BYO morning and/or afternoon tea. Outdoor excursions are likely to be cancelled in extreme weather conditions. There are NO excursions on total fire ban days.

Business meetings - third Thursday of each month, except December, at George Broadways; 24a Greenhill Ave., at 6.00 pm. Members are invited to attend.

Club website - http://castlemainefnc.wordpress.com/

Subscriptions for 2015
Ordinary membership: Single $30, Family $40
Pensioner or student: Single $25, Family $30
Subscription includes postage of the monthly newsletter, Castlemaine Naturalist

2015 Committee

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